

Notes from May 12 Meeting

Present:

David Bobanick – Rotary First Harvest
Branden Born-- UW Urban Planning-faculty
Laurie Clinton – King County Ag Programs
Mary Embelton – Cascade Harvest Coalition
Steve Evans – King County Ag Programs
Holly Freishtat, WSU FoodSense
Janis Harsila – SNAC
Sylvia Kantor, WSU KCE
Sharon Lerman--WSU FoodSense
Linda Nageotte-- Food Lifeline
Gwen Rousseau –UW Urban Planning-student
Becka Warren- WSU Small Farms Program
Erin Schau – UW Urban Planning-student
Haley Smith – Seattle P-Patch Program
Leslie Zenz- WSDA

Welcome and Introductions - Sylvia

- overview of creating a healthy foodshed handout- introduction of foodshed programs: farmtoschool forum, food sense, this meeting, etc.

Overview of food policy councils - Leslie

- officially sanctioned bodies that are formed with governmental and nongovernmental organizations bringing together stakeholders from all areas of the issue – in order to promote solutions that can impact policy, preferably impacting multiple sectors of the community
- Benefits: building broader coalition to be able to address policy by using multi-sector collaboration, personal connections that people are making in other sectors: phenomenal synergies emerge
- State level councils: focus on state agencies and policy recommendations, act as an advisory body
- Local/county level: policy recommendations, but tend to be more project oriented, use data collection as a basis for making policy recommendations
- Something we need to know/discuss: what are county relationships like, how do county orgs and ngos work together?

Setting goals for the Council

- Why form a food policy council?
- What will the council do?

Is there a need for a food policy council in KC? What would your goals be?

- David: Might be easier at county levels: don't have as many large-scale farmers so that might not be an obstacle

- Mary: it's critical to build these relationships with one another, share information among multi-sector agencies, bring together people who are ready integrate issues of food/nutrition/access. Also, we should take advantage of having a KC executive who looks favorably on these issues
- Gwen: dissemination of information to public, not just among/within sectors
- Holly: inclusive so its looking at populations other than just low income populations- needs to address all people regardless of income in relation to where our food is coming from, but making sure it ties together and resonates for all people
- How do we define local?
- Becka: maybe it would be a relief to county agencies – sort of an advisory committee to help them deal with issues that they are committed to: food access, health concerns, ag concerns
- Paul: its critical for people to come together – also we'd be able to advocate for certain policies: ie farm to school or institutional buying program from local sources
- Lori – FPC would support ag commission in many ways and this is necessary because there is lots of anti-ag sentiment around the county. County needs to consider eastern Washington issues and learn to work with farmers (even large-scale commodity farmers) from eastern Washington
- Brandon: we should recognize that many people will have different values and different professional perspectives. we need to recognize that this is going to happen and that this is actually important, and accept that other people have different perspectives and learn to work together despite them. also education is important. We think this is common knowledge, but there are so many people who don't even think about these ideas, especially not in the terms we do. Need to have a clear message on this
- Janice: low-cost produce and protein sources – tying in to local fishermen as well.
- Erin: an initial goal should be an identification of the system
- Linda: yes there is a need because right now we are each making decisions in our own areas of interest from within our own context and not necessarily considering how those decisions will affect other portions of the system. But thinking on a systems perspective will keep us aware of how our individual decisions affect other programs and other parts of the system. Its important to acknowledge interconnectedness
- Haley: one of the best things that happened in Portland (in the food policy council process) was that the policymakers became aware of how their programs/policies affected the food system- engaging them in those conversations is a huge step to get them to advocate for food system issues
- Paul: it would be great to have a city/county ordinance to buy a certain percentage of food locally as an institutional buy

How do we design the council as something that people are going to be invested in and want to keep coming to?

- How do we create relevance?
- Some projects elevate the concern and make people realize the importance of the issue, ie: a grocery store survey, cheap, easy to do, would serve a useful purpose to a locality- USDA standard basket survey and mapping of stores, correlating with populations who utilize them
- Should be reframe this a strategies to achieve an end "sustainable" or "economically efficient" instead of framing this around local because local is so up for debate and might not be the ultimate end to aim for

- Need to have benchmarks when we come to the table together so that people can feel that they've achieved goals when they come (then they'll tend to come back)
- Coming to a meeting knowing what the discussion is about and then approaching that goal from the point of reference of that discussion

What are the steps to forming this council?

Usually the government appoints the council based on recommendations from those who are initiating it.

It might be better to use a commission systems where the county council and the executive appoint people and then they advise the council and the policymakers

Steve: Thinks that this needs to be a larger body than just king county. Maybe Puget Sound? Maybe with at least Snohomish and Pierce? Land use and hunger issues seem similar in these other counties

Leslie: would it make more sense to have separate councils for different counties?

Steve: this is something that should have been regionalized a long time ago and we should take the opportunity to make this a regional body

Mary: What form do you have to be in to do policy advocacy? Because we want to do more than just recommendations

Leslie: Those with official govt sanction are not allowed to lobby. NGO folks on those councils are allowed to lobby on behalf of the recommendations that come out of the council. But being sanctioned by the government has more credibility and more power than not having that sanction and being "just another lobbying group"

-sylvia: local councils tend to be at city level- there aren't many at county level. But the Portland/Multnomah county is city/county which might be a good way to look

Haley: Portland one came out of the city. But wanted to be able to affect change at both levels because the different government agencies had different jurisdictions and different parts of work.

Linda: if someone could pull resource documents together and provide them for everyone, that would be useful. Would give us the same depth of information to work from

Mary: Puget sound regional council: deals with transportation in 5 counties. The thing is that they are focused on a single issue. In our case, its so multi-issue that if we try to work in all 5 counties we'll maybe be too scattered.

Do we want to be one county or multi-county etc?

Sharon/Gwen: smaller, one-county seems like a good place to start. Policy will effect places outside the county, but in terms of affecting government, its good to have one set of policymakers to work with

-or maybe we could have parallel food policy councils in other counties?

What information do people want?

-Info about what food policy councils have done and their jurisdiction: matrix

-how do we approach the county? What's the process? What are the entry points?

-we have 3 county council people who are interested – Sylvia is in contact with them

-how this is different from the ag commission

would lori and mary be able to inform the rest of the group on what the ag commission does/is doing and how this is different? Yes

-list of what different councils have acheived

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Establishment

King County Executive order? City Council? Both?

We don't know yet. Will address at next meeting

Who should be at the table? Identify stakeholder categories

- seattle office of sustainability (steve nicholas)
- county officials
- county council (rich conlin)
- neighborhood farmers market coalition
- dshs- federal nutrition program folks (kim)
- senior program folks (mary)
- public health (Shirley Hutchinson, jim thompson)
- thousand friends
- tribes (need to invite all: Snoqualmie, muckleshoot, maybe nisqually)
- PCC
- state grocery association
- chef's collaborative, Slow food
- farm bureau
- media: cooksen beecher (capital press)
- media: xiao ching-chao (sp?)
- labor and transportation sectors *janice*
- city/county planning departments *Brandon*
- labor- farmworker or grocery labor *becka*
- charlie's produce (diane) *linda*
- audobon society
- puget sound regional council – bob drool
- restaurants (Karen jergenson)
- restaurant association

perhaps we should contact all of these folks and invite them to the next planning meeting, letting them know where we are and that we want their input

Next Steps

becka: we should have another planning meeting and it would be a huge success if all of those at the table right now come back. We'll have the new information about food councils and will be going from a further point. Also we'll invite some of these new folks. We can talk about establishment strategy, goal setting.

Perhaps we could conduct a stakeholder survey of sorts

Becka provided a summary of what she has been working on, King County Food System Atlas – economic analysis of direct marketing in three states that'll be overlaid with other data about marketing

- Brandon says that perhaps UW graduate students could do some of the research (ie food systems assessment) that would be useful to the planning process and to the council.

Next meeting wed. June 9th 10-12am